

SOURCES OF LOVE AND HATE

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known to psycho-analysts. I am able to quote some actual instances which came to my notice recently: "I should be so grateful if you could help me with my little girl, aged sixteen months. When she is left on her pot to do her morn-ing duty she does it, and then proceeds to put her hands in and play with it. She does this if nurse is in the room and once or twice nurse has been outside and when she has come back has found Baby covered all over, with it smeared all over her hair, and sometimes eating and enjoying it. She also sucks her wet nappies. (She wears nappies when resting in her cot in the afternoon.) She is perfectly normal in other ways, very forward in walking. She walked at eleven months and is very tall for her age. I do not like to ask other mothers about this disgusting habit, as I feel quite ashamed to possess such a child. Baby has an enormous appetite and sleeps well, and is always happy and very independent. I enclose a snapshot of her with her sister, so you can see how well she looks." The father of a baby girl of just one year old told me of how, if a soiled napkin were not removed at once when she had defaecated early in the morning, she would wriggle about until she could get to the faeces and would then smear it over her fingers and face and put her smeared fingers into her mouth. She did this on half a dozen occasions until her mother learnt to remove the opportunity. Mrs. Y. and Mrs. Z., both mothers of boys, the first boy nine months of age, the second twelve months, both reported to me exactly the same behavi-our. Mrs. Y.'s boy, for example, lay unusually quiet one morning before his parents got up instead of his usual moving about and gurgling in his cot. When his mother

went to see
what was happening, he had smeared his faeces
over his hands
and face and put it into his mouth.

The positive pleasure in the act and the
product of evacuation
does not, however, long remain
uncomplicated in the child.
The opposite feeling of the " badness " of
excrement and
urine begins to appear in varying strength in
the overt
behaviour of most children of eighteen months
and over, and
sometimes even earlier. Some of the incidents
quoted here
show this feeling plainly. For example: (p. 122,
24.11.24)

" Frank said, ' Shall we make Benjie drink bee-
wee water ?'
'Yes/ Harold said, 'and poison him*. And
another time,
' and make spots come out all over him'." (P.
123, 25.3.25)